

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, last week was a dark day in the history of international law. By a vote of 14 to 1, the International Court of Justice at The Hague condemned Israel's right of self-defense in the construction of a security fence to protect innocent civilians from terrorist attacks.

During my visit to Israel in January, I saw firsthand, as I toured the fence, how the fence each and every day protects innocent civilians' lives. I came back and, along with the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY), authored a resolution, cosponsored by 163 of my colleagues. Today, in form and fashion, this will come to the floor of Congress as H. Res. 713.

Today, Congress will respond by standing strongly and boldly with our precious ally, Israel, in her right to defend her own innocent civilians from terrorist assault. I urge all of my colleagues to join us as cosponsors again and, of course, to support H. Res. 713, deploring the misuse of the International Court of Justice by a majority of the United Nations General Assembly for narrow political purposes.

#### ECONOMIC RECOVERY

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, in the coming months, we are going to hear a lot of talk from our Republican friends about an economic recovery. No doubt they will use statistics to claim that the President's economic policies are working, but do not go telling that to the middle-class families in my district about a recovery, because they have not seen one.

Since the President was inaugurated, America has lost 1.8 million jobs in the private sector. Mr. Bush is in a race with Mr. Hoover to have the worst administration in this last century.

Most of the few new jobs we are creating pay lower wages than the national average, most come without health care benefits, and yet the President still maintains his economic policies, cutting taxes for the wealthy and outsourcing jobs, are the way of solving the problems.

The American people know better. The President can say things are looking up. He can repeat that line over and over and over and over again, but he cannot hide the truth. The economy is still in trouble.

Fortunately, in 111 days, the Americans will get a chance to let the President know about how they feel about his economic recovery. When they do, the President will be packing his bags and heading back to Texas. November 2 is coming, Mr. Speaker.

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#### AUSTRALIAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Australian-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, which will be good for our farmers, manufacturers, and businesses both small and large. Last year, Australia imported \$44.5 million worth of transportation equipment, \$20.9 million in manufactured machinery, and \$7.1 million in food products from Kansas alone. These strong figures characterize the trade relationship between Kansas and Australia, which is destined to grow substantially.

In 2003, Australia was the 10th largest export market for my State. With the Free Trade Agreement in place, 99 percent of Kansas' goods will enter Australia tariff-free. I believe this will translate into higher revenues for small businesses, greater agricultural trade for farmers and more jobs for Kansans.

What will be good for Kansas will also be good for the rest of the Nation. In fact, it is expected that manufacturing exports will increase by at least \$2 billion, significantly boosting the economy. We currently run a trade surplus with Australia, and the Free Trade Agreement will ensure that this strong trade relationship continues.

I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of an important national debate on environmental protection, particularly in light of over 300 Bush administration environmental rollbacks. Yesterday was perhaps the most important announcement from this administration as they have opened up 60 million acres in national forests that were previously protected after extensive rulemaking throughout the Clinton administration. They now propose to turn that on its head and to abrogate Federal responsibility for our Federal land. The forests will be opened unless every State moves to protect, without national standards or safeguards.

It is unrealistic to expect every State to withstand extreme pressures from the special interests. History shows us that. The reason that every major environmental law was enacted at the Federal level was because we needed uniform national standards, and State stewardship was not adequate. The public knows that environmental protection to avoid a sad patchwork in our national forests requires that the Fed-

eral Government and this administration exercise full partnership. Sadly, the administration does not understand or support that concept.

#### SOLDIER HEROISM: STAFF SERGEANT ADAM SYKES

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an American hero. Staff Sergeant Adam Sykes decided not to attend Georgetown University so that he could serve our Nation in Iraq.

In a tense battle in April 2003, Sykes's unit was pinned down by an Iraqi ambush. He quickly rallied two of his squads in a counterattack. He positioned both squads and charged an enemy stronghold all by himself, bounding over 70 meters of fire as it swept across the ground. He reached his objective and cleared it with a grenade and a machine gun. Then, while still exposed to the enemy, he climbed to the third floor of a building so that he could get a good vantage point to call in mortar fire. Additionally, he moved to a squad that had taken casualties and managed himself to help in their evacuation.

After the awards ceremony, Sykes said, "So many people are pouring out their hearts over there trying to make things right."

May God bless the men and women of our Armed Forces and may God bless America.

#### DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS MEETS WITH THEIR VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we had a very positive event this morning, and that was the meeting of the House Democratic Caucus with the Vice Presidential nominee-to-be, JOHN EDWARDS. I think it is important to note what a hopeful and bright, engaging, but very committed and dedicated person and human being he is. I believe what America needs today is to look to the future for a greater hope for our young people, a peaceful world, a resolving of crises around the world. JOHN EDWARDS brings to this great Nation an opportunity to work toward a conciliation, not stepping away from the war on terror, but standing up to it and bringing more allies to the table. What a wonderful new day to know that America does have hope.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the opportunity for debate and for this distinguished Member of the Senate to be able to inform America of the greatness of his desire to serve but, more importantly, the hopefulness that he brings to America.